

Delaware's 23rd Annual Chautauqua From Sept. 9–12, 2021

(DOVER, Del. – Aug. 23, 2021) – American enterprise and ingenuity will be brought to life in Delaware's 23rd annual Chautauqua, "The I's Have It: Industry, Innovation, and Invention," that will be livestreamed on the Internet from Sept. 9 through 12, 2021. Delaware's Chautauqua programs are produced by the [Zwaanendael Museum](#) and the [New Castle Court House Museum](#).



Each day of activities will be capped off with evening performances by actor-historians from the [American Historical Theatre](#) portraying, respectively, George Washington Carver, Thomas Edison, Madame C.J. Walker and Alexander Graham Bell. For a complete listing of activities, go to <https://history.delaware.gov/23rd-annual-chautauqua/>.



Keith Henley will
portray George
Washington Carver on
Sept. 9, 2021.

In addition to being livestreamed, two programs in Lewes, Del. will feature live, in-person programs held in Stango Park, 114 Third St. – a concert by the Smooth Sound Big Band at 6 p.m. on Sept. 9, and an Old-Time Radio Show presented by the Possum Point Players Radio Theatre at 6 p.m. on Sept. 10. Visitors attending these programs must bring their own chairs.



Bob Gleason will
portray Thomas Edison
on Sept. 10, 2021.

In addition to being livestreamed, all events on Sept. 11 and 12 will be presented in a tent located on The Green adjacent to The New Castle Court House Museum at 211 Delaware St in New Castle, Del. In-person attendance will be allowed for all New Castle programs. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own chairs as limited seating will be available.



Daisy Century will
portray Madame
C.J. Walker on the
New Castle Green
on Sept. 11, 2021.

Admission for all Chautauqua programs is free and open to the public. For additional information, contact the Zwaanendael Museum at 302-645-1148, or the New Castle Court House Museum at ncchmuseum@delaware.gov or 302-323-4453.



Bob Gleason will
portray Alexander
Graham Bell on the
New Castle Green on
Sept. 12, 2021.

Chautauqua takes its name from a series of adult education programs that were first held at a campsite on the shores of Lake Chautauqua in upstate New York during the late 19th century. Chautauquas spread throughout America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries bringing speakers, teachers, musicians, entertainers, preachers and specialists of the day to a wide cross-section of the nation's rural and small-town

population. Circuit Chautauquas (also known as Tent Chautauquas) were an itinerant manifestation of the movement. Programs would be presented in tents pitched in a field near town. After several days, the Chautauqua would fold its tents and move on to the next community. The popularity of Chautauquas peaked in the mid-1920s, after which radio, movies and automobiles brought about the gradual disappearance of the movement by the 1940s.

Reborn in the 1970s as a vehicle for humanities education, modern Chautauquas are organized around a core program in which re-enactors take on the personas of celebrated historical figures, educating and entertaining audiences as they bring the past to life. Modern Chautauquas have been presented annually in Delaware since 1999 featuring a wide variety of historical figures including Lucretia Mott; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; Mark Twain; Woodrow Wilson; Teddy Roosevelt; Abraham Lincoln; Amelia Earhart; Dolley Madison; Eleanor Roosevelt; Edgar Allan Poe; the Lone Ranger; John Philip Sousa; and Delaware's own Pvt. James Elbert, Maj. Allen McLane, F.O.C. Darley and Clifford Brown.

"The I's Have It: Industry, Innovation, and Invention" is co-sponsored by the [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs'](#) Zwaanendael and New Castle Court House museums, and the [New Castle Historical Society](#). Partial funding is provided by grants from the New Castle Arts Council, [New Castle Community Partnership](#) and [Delaware Humanities](#), a state program of the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#).



The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is an agency of the State of Delaware. The division enhances Delaware's quality of life by preserving the state's unique historical heritage, fostering community stability and economic vitality and providing educational programs and assistance to the general public on Delaware history. The division's diverse

array of services includes operation of five museums which are [accredited by the American Alliance of Museums](#), administration of the State Historic Preservation Office, conservation of the state's archaeological and historic-objects collections, operation of a conference center and management of historic properties across the state. Primary funding for division programs and services is provided by annual appropriations from the Delaware General Assembly and grants from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, a federal agency. However, the contents and opinions expressed in the division's programs and services do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior.

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